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against the use of certain materials as they now do; for it is difficult to get a contractor to use material out of the regular practice of his trade, which can only be done by paying an inordinate price, or else submitting to use what we think inappropriate. Though we have all desirable metals and all kinds of machinery to work them, there are as yet no persons in this country who make a business of ornamental metal working, and we must needs go for such things to blacksmiths, who, though generally understanding how to do what we desire, yet lack that experience which is only to be found in practiced hands. We know of as fine clays as can be found anywhere, and those of various colors, yet no bricks are made in the best possible manner except those from Philadelphia and Baltimore, which are of one color, red. While a clay is found near Milwaukie, from which, with sufficient care in the manufacturing, bricks could be made as uniform and perfect as those from Philadelphia, of a beautiful yellow color; yet they are so irregular in size, that it is useless to attempt to use

them with red brick. Our workmen, upon whom more depends than upon aught else, and more particularly carvers in stone and wood, should and can be educated. We have very many, most of whom have come from Europe, who understand their business as a trade, as well as any that can be found elsewhere, and many of whom understand it as an art. The latter can be encouraged by having given to them work upon which they can exercise their faculties; the former must first be taught wherein real artistic work consists, and then be set to work untrammelled by conventionalism and rules of art—seeking only in nature the form and spirit of all that is beautiful—actuated as they work by no vain desires either to improve nature or to make her the servant of their pride, but by the one earnest intent to interpret her mysteries, and bring others to appreciate them; which can only result from a pure and holy love for her creations.

CH.

To be continued.

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## THE WORK OF THE TRUE AND THE FALSE SCHOOLS.

It has been said by some of our readers, and with some truth, that our journal talks in a general way about the principles of true art but does not tell us the real, tangible difference between the opinions and works of the true and false schools. The purpose of this article is to state in plain terms the positive difference between the conventional and true artist.

We believe that all nature being the perfected work of the Creator should be treated with the reverence due to its Author, and by *nature* they do not mean only the great mountains and wonderful land effects, but also every dear weed that daily gives forth its life unheeded, to the skies; every blade of grass that waves and shivers in the wind; every beautiful pebble that rolls and rattles on the sea sand. Some things teach *one* lesson, some another, but all are absolutely perfect, and one of them missed breaks that

complete unity which is one of the noblest revelations of God that we possess, and is made expressly for our study and love.

Believing this earnestly and deeply, and seeing God and hearing His voice in every golden-hearted star that bends before the wind, in every blade of grass, in every rosy clover head, and every golden dandelion, think you we would dare to draw or paint any one of these things, bent into grace and loveliness by God's finger, carelessly or coarsely, and give a round or square dab of paint to this world as the truth of mullen, thistle or dock leaf? Now the old school believe that nature is something to be used when they cannot do without it, to make pictures of, or as one of their strongest landscape painters said, "to get notions of pictures from—a convenient medium, through which we give our own little selves and our notions of composition,

general effect and fine tone, to the world; and only to be used to get arrangement of lines, ideas of skies, and general massing of light and shade for pictures."

Take as an illustration of the difference between the two schools, the way in which the artists of each use their time in this country. One goes out of town just as soon as it is warm enough to work. He does not spend much time searching for noble subjects, knowing that everything touched by God is beautiful and valuable to the world—but, believing every subject worthy, he goes to work at once earnestly and lovingly, endeavoring faithfully to render every beautiful curve of line and every smallest shadow and tender gradation of light and color; and on this if it be a pencil drawing he may work not less than six weeks; if an oil study, about three months.

What is the other artist doing in the meantime? He stays in his studio until it becomes too warm to live in the city; then he thinks and wonders, and makes all sorts of inquiries as to the most suitable place. The very finest scenery in the country must be placed before him before he will deign to put brush to canvass. He starts about the middle of July, and this notice appears in the daily papers, under the head of "art items," "Mr. I. P. Mahlstock, has gone to the Catskills for a few days, after which he intends to pass through Vermont and enrich his portfolio by a few weeks' stay in the White Mountains. He expects to be back in his studio about the middle of September."

Arrived in Catskill, he stays one day in the village; walks about until he finds the finest views of the mountains, when he spends half an hour making a sketch; that is, he scribbles on a large sheet of tinted paper the mere outlines of the mountains and trees, and those not truly; then he goes to dinner, after which he takes another splendid view in about the same time and manner. In the evening he leaves for the Mountain House, feeling no regret at passing by all the noble things that surround him on every side, but thinking he has done all that the scenery deserves. In the mountains he stays about a week, covering large sheets of paper with mere lines and

"notions for pictures," making several very broad oil sketches, putting down on his canvass not the colors of nature but those which he has learned in the studio to substitute for them, brown for green, grey for blue, and ochre for gold.

Having so done the Catskills it will be time for him to think of some other place, say Vermont, for about a week, and then he will spend three more at the White Mountains, where he will make what he calls his earnest oil studies, and at the end of six weeks he is home again—his portfolio enriched with numerous large sheets of coarse tinted paper, covered with scribbled outlines of subjects and several very broad oil sketches from which he will manufacture an endless number of pictures of every conceivable subject, size and price, for the next nine months. This is the practical difference in their manner of work.

We will now endeavor to express in words a few of the more salient differences between the *pictures* of the two men, and hope by this means to dissipate the erroneous idea so generally held that the new school men paint nothing but detail. The aim and purpose of every artist that is true to our principles is to paint the *whole* truth of everything, and in so far as they fall short of this purpose they are false to nature and our principles. In so far as their work fails to express such intention, they are *unsuccessful*, not false, or wrong. This is the only true standard by which to judge an artist's work. If their intention was right their work must be good. If their intention was wrong no amount of success in carrying out their purposes can ever make their work noble or themselves right.

We have before us a pencil drawing by one of the true men, not more than six inches long and four wide. The amount of truth that is crowded on this small piece of paper might shame any of the old school men who yearly cover the walls of the Academy with canvasses, six or eight feet long. The drawing represents the interior of a pine wood. In the upper left hand corner in less than two inches of space are drawn the trunks of about ten forest trees, lichen covered and various in light and shade; all the distinctive

characters of each at the distance of about two hundred feet from the spectator perfectly rendered. It is true, all the details of this scene are drawn, yet no leaves are to be seen and no distinct marking of the bark on the tree stems, though we feel all the unevenness of their surface. Between the trunks the limbs of each tree, covered with foliage, stand out dark against the sky. The foliage at this distance is nothing but a soft, confused mass of light and shade, and yet we could not lose the smallest of these little masses, for each one means a limb, covered with its hundreds of thousands of beautifully formed leaves, sparkling in the sunlight. They bend gracefully to the ground or hold up their leaves to the sky according to the growth and character of the tree. We can no more allow an artist to draw these forms carelessly or falsely than to put meaningless touches in his foreground for leaf or weed. This is only two inches of the drawing. No words can describe the myriad facts and marvellous delicacy and decision of hand and eye that has followed every little clover leaf with a loving care, and rendered the whole truth of every patch of lichen on the tree stems—in the foreground. Several broken limbs partially covered by grasses, and dead and fallen leaves lie in the nearest foreground, not the sixteenth of an inch in diameter, yet each one has its perfect gradation of light and shade. On the under side the most delicate little reflected lights prove that the leaves and grasses are drawn with marvellous accuracy. Then comes the shadow and then the highest light giving perfect roundness to it. This drawing was made entirely out of doors.

Now take a picture by an artist of the old school, painted in the studio. It is about three feet long by two wide. In the distance are some pale greyish blue mountains, not *pure* blue or purple as they would be in nature. On the left hand side a group of trees of raw sienna green stand up against the sky. On the right hand side are some smaller trees with cattle standing sleepily under them. A quiet stream runs through the centre of the picture and over it a little wooden bridge, and on the bridge some country folks in a wagon go

riding to market. On the left side of the stream two men are fishing. Right in the foreground is a man in a little boat but what he is doing there we cannot tell for no oars are to be seen. On either bank great masses of yellowish brown are intended to represent the fullness of a foreground life, but we cannot find a distinct form of either grass or leaf. The lights and shadows are all blended into the "sweetest softness."

You cannot tell whether the sun is shining though the sky is quite clear, because there are none of the sharp shadows which sunlight would throw upon the large trees on the left. Although quite near to the spectator we fail to discover a single form bearing close resemblance to a leaf. True the canvas is covered with little touches of paint made with the sharp end of a camel's hair brush, but they look as much like the spots on a checker board as leaves on a tree. One side of a tree is dark and the other side light. This correspondence holds good throughout the picture. There is light in the upper part of every tree which gradually blends into dark shadow. Every line and edge is soft and uncertain, the picture having been scumbled over when finished, with a mixture of white permanent blue and naples yellow to give it atmosphere.

This is no fancy sketch but a description of an actual picture by one of our most popular men, and is a very good type of the mass of studio pictures that are so pleasing to the ignorant public. Everything is softly and superficially touched upon, but nothing thoroughly drawn or painted. The mind cannot rest with satisfaction upon any part of it for more than three minutes. And such are the pictures in front of which ladies and connoisseurs congregate, expressing their admiration in this wise, "What a lovely picture! O, Mrs. Smith, isn't it sweet? Everything so soft and delicate! nothing positively defined! such a velvety texture to everything; so artistic and beautifully generalized." Whereupon Smith who has been to Italy, seen a great many pictures by the old masters and thoroughly enjoys generalization, central light and velvety textures, buys the picture for five hundred dollars, puts it in a prom-

inent place in his drawing-room where it becomes the centre of attraction for a select circle of connoisseurs and artistic friends.

As another illustration of the variety of truths given in one picture by the new school let us look for a few minutes at one of the noblest of modern pictures, Hunt's "Light of the World." Three distinct truths of light—the starlight, the dawn of day and the lantern light—fill the picture with the most wonderful combination of color ever given in the same space to the world. The golden glow of the lantern light makes the leaves of the foreground weeds bright yellow on one side and deep purple on the other. It gilds the ivy leaves climbing over the door that typifies the sinner's heart, and throws sharp yellow lights over the drapery. It also lights all the projecting parts of the face with its amber glow, and mingles with and gradually loses itself in the bluish-purple starlight.

These effects of light were all painted in the open air from a real lantern in the veritable starlight. In the near foreground lie the apples of the neglected orchard, also receiving light from the lantern, their rosy roundness clearly defined; even the dew-drops on the near blades of grass as they sparkle in the lamp-light are not forgotten, (another truth never given before to the world by the artists.) The transparent blue, studded with its sparkling gems of silver and flushed with the promise of the dawn, is also one of the finest parts of the picture, being beautifully painted.

A distant apple tree rises dark against the sky, and we call the attention of all who believe that the new school paints nothing but detail to this, for it is a most wonderful piece of realistic mystery and uncertain, yet of most characteristic drawing. Notice the graceful curvature of the fruit-bearing limbs and the drawing of the leaves. You seem to see each leaf, and as you look they vanish—there and not there; certain and uncertain. We will not attempt to put into words the expression of the face towards which all the accessories so faithfully point.

The sincerity and passionate earnestness of these men, are sights as noble as they are new to the world, and ought, if they gain nothing else,

to command the respect of the people! They are the only men who give us consummate drawings; pure, true and splendid colors and perfect realization of every fact properly belonging to the subject. Consequently no two pictures by these men can resemble each other, for every one is a faithful record of some new fact in nature. But every argument that can possibly be brought to bear upon the subject, speaks, in tones deep as their purpose, of the divine nature of the cause in which they are engaged, and the absolute certainty of its success. On the other hand, think for a moment, what will be the fate of the art of painting if it is allowed to go on year after year, filling the world with its tinsel gew-gaws and worthless inanities, without a single word of protest from one earnest truth-loving soul.

It is indeed a painful thought, first to look upon nature, the infinitely varied expression of the divine mind—then to think of men in this age of enlightened thought—men in the full exercise of all their powers, understanding, thought and wills, *rejecting* nature with all her beauty and her noble lessons—leaving them all unregarded and unrecorded,—and for what? Really and practically to do homage to their material bodies and earthly senses; loving and studying the outside, but utterly regardless of the rich and marvellous depths of the soul within.

The protest is now being made; by young men, it is true, who are not nearly so strong or so talented as we could wish, but whose intentions and purposes are noble and right. The pertinacity with which the public fight their cause, only yielding their ground when left without an argument, clinging to their old idols and rejecting the new truth without thought or criticism, is strange as it is unfortunate and useless.

Less than ten years ago there was but one man in America, W. J. Stillman, who practically understood and believed in the new art. To-day it counts its believers by tens instead of units. When we think of what has been accomplished in England since the first protest against the old conventionalisms was made by only two young men of determined purpose and large

natural ability, we cannot despair of the cause in America.

In less than twenty years the realistic painters have revolutionized art in England. They now count in their ranks the names of all the men of any talent whatsoever. Year after year they crowd the walls of the Royal Academy with the most intensely earnest renderings of natural fact. The old Academicians who in the commencement of the struggle would say

not a word in their defense, or lift a finger to ward off the malicious abuse and ignorant criticism that assailed their faithful work, are now endeavoring, with more or less power, to follow the lead of their young masters. If this has been done in tradition-loving Europe, where the old canons of art are so authoritative, what may we not hope to accomplish in radical America.

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